



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CROATIA

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

HIV/AIDS



USAID Croatia

In Rijeka, more than 80 high school students volunteered to assist NGO Terra trainers in organizing presentations in their schools. Thirty-eight students were selected by Terra to become peer educators (or trainers) on HIV/AIDS awareness raising. Subsequently, these 38 students organized and trained peers in about 70 workshops for a total of about 300 students. In addition, Terra developed a network of local doctors, medical nurses, teachers, psychologists and social workers that actively participated in project outreach and training.

Implementer: American International Health Alliance (AIHA), Academy for Educational Development

Partners: NGO "HELP" and City of Split, Terra NGO (Rijeka); Youth Peace Group Danube (Vukovar)

Project completed ... 2004

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Croatia is less than .02%. However, as a significant east-west crossroad and a major tourist destination, this situation could change in the future. USAID funded several projects in cooperation with local NGOs.

In Split, NGO "HELP" developed HIV/AIDS prevention activities that included a media campaign and community awareness materials. This improved access to HIV-related education for youth in school and for those not attending anymore, particularly for at risk adolescents. Messages were disseminated through the radio, TV, print media and community activities that included popular singers, athletes who advocated preventive behavior. At-risk populations were reached through a hotline that was opened and through confidential counseling.

In Rijeka, NGO "Terra" increased the awareness of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases among high school students, parents and teachers. The project helped improve preventive and protective behavior through peer education and roundtables. It continues in close cooperation with several high schools and the Zagreb Clinic for Children's Diseases - Service for Reproductive Health. Activities included a baseline survey of the target population, peer training program, and community events.

In Vukovar, the youth peace group "Danube" contributed to the reduction of the spread of HIV/AIDS through a public education campaign in four towns in Eastern Croatia that targeted over 15,000 youth, teachers and other persons that work with youth. Roundtable discussions and lectures were held in high schools and information kiosks were set up. Youth actively participated and formed teams that continue to spread information in their communities, schools and places where youth gather. The local government also participated in lectures and roundtables. The project received positive media coverage by the local newspapers and radios.

Results In Split, 212 new clients received free voluntary HIV/AIDS counseling and testing. By project end, 145 calls were received on a hotline with specific questions such as "where do I go for testing" and "how do I catch HIV/AIDS?" USAID printed and distributed 19,000 brochures and educational posters to at-risk groups, including youth. USAID persuaded a local TV station to donate airtime for public service announcements with HIV/AIDS prevention messages. In Vukovar, about 320 youth participated in workshops/lectures and received information on the dangers of HIV/AIDS (methods of transmission and prevention, and stigmatization issues). USAID printed 4,000 posters, 2,600 T-shirts, and 3,000 brochures distributed to approximately 3,000 young persons.